

# **Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)**

## **February 12, 2010**

**Working sessions: 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

**Council Meeting: 11:00-3:00 p.m.**

**The Cornhusker Hotel, Yankee Hill Rooms; Lincoln, Nebraska**

Ruth Miller, chair, opened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council at 11:30 a.m. on February 12, 2010 at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. Ruth noted the posting of a copy of the Open Meetings Act. Those in attendance made self introductions.

*Members present:* A.Kathryn Anderson, Maya Chilese, Eric Dunning, Carol Fichter, Heather Gill, Laura Good Buffalo, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Chris Hanus, Sara Johnson, Eleanor Kirkland, Susan McWilliams, Julie Middendorf, Ruth Miller, Tammy Mittelstaedt, Amy Pair, Carrie Rasmussen, Stephanie Rau, Deb Ross, Joyce Thomas, Carey Winkler, Linda Zinke.

*Members absent:* Sarah Briggs, Chris Hanus, Pam Dobrovolny, Melody Hobson, Carol McClain, Michelle Merrill, Nancy Montgomery, Todd Reckling, Roger Reikofski, Deanna Schulze, Janet Staehr, Lisa Suckstorf,

*Also in attendance: ECICC Staff:* Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary; *Technical Assistants:* National Child Care Information Center–Rae Anderson; Head Start State-based Training and Technical Assistance–Heather Fox; PTI-Nebraska–Connie Shockley; Munroe Meyer Institute –Mark Smith; NDHHS–Lynne Brehm, Amy Bunnell, Shirley Pickens-White; NDE–Joan Luebbbers; *Guests:* Jen Benson, NDE Office of Early Childhood; Beaky Veak, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation.

The Family Leadership Team, the Gaps and Barriers Committee, and the Legislative and Communications Committee met in working sessions beginning at 8:00 a.m. before the opening of the regular Council meeting.

### **MEETING AGENDA:**

#### **1. Opening and Announcements:**

##### **i. Approval of minutes**

*Motion*, Laura Good Buffalo; seconded, Joyce Thomas: To approve the ECICC minutes of November 13, 2009, as submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. There was no discussion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

##### **ii. Announcements and updates**

- Terry Rohren reviewed plans for the May 14, 2010 meeting, which will be held simultaneously at Chadron State College and Nebraska Educational Television (NET) in Lincoln via teleconferencing. Members completed a preliminary survey regarding their attendance intentions.
- Ruth Miller announced that Leisha Suckstorf was nominated to the Steering Committee to fill the vacancy created by Derek Weimer's resignation from the Council. Members cast paper ballots and elected Leisha to fill the vacant parent position.
- Susan Dahm reminded members of the 45-day timeline to submit expenses and reviewed options to set up electronic payment of expenses.
- Members were provided with a list of proposed dates for ECICC meetings in 2011: February 11, May 13, August 26, and November 18.

*Motion*, Deb Ross: seconded, Laura Good Buffalo: To approve the proposed meeting dates for 2010. There was no discussion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

- The Part C Annual Performance Report (APR) was submitted to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on February 1, 2010. Members of ECICC will receive a printed copy of the report. The APR may be accessed on the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) website, <http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/data.html>. Links are also found on the Early Development Network (EDN) website, <http://edn.ne.gov/spp/index.html>.

## 2. Reports from Working Sessions

### a. Family Leadership Team

Tammy Mittelstaedt reported that the Family Leadership Team had looked at *Newsline* and the Early Intervention Family Alliance website for families to use as resources to learn more about legislation and issues that impact families of children with disabilities. The Family Alliance website requires an organization subscription of about \$50. Joan Luebbbers will bring a request to Gary Sherman to see if the Special Education Office can subscribe as a resource for Part C. If NDE subscribes, Susan will notify ECICC members to allow use of the site.

The Family Leadership Team would like to compile information about the structure and members of the Council, more on the “alphabet soup” resource, and issues in legislation that would be helpful for families.

### b. Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC)

Heather Gill reported that the GBC heard updates from the Office of Early Childhood and the Early Development Network. Chris Hanus, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) presented information on changes in the way services coordination is contracted. The group also discussed behavioral health services for children and expressed a desire to compile more information on what is occurring in infant mental health, available services, and Medicaid managed care. The GBC also reviewed revisions to its charter, a draft of which was provided to the Council, and brought a recommendation that it be approved by the Council.

*Motion*, Carol Fichter; seconded, Heather Gill: To approve revisions to the charter of the Gaps and Barriers Committee as recommended. There was no discussion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

### c. Legislative and Communications Committee (LCC)

Jane Happe reported for the LCC and distributed a packet of information about the lawmaking process, legislative committees and chairs, and 2010 legislative bills related to early childhood. She reviewed pending legislation and briefly described the bills that the LCC prioritized for their focus. She noted that few of the bills have funding attached. She briefly explained some of the issues that the LCC is following, including kindergarten entry age and readiness. The LCC proposed that the ECICC recommend that the Early Childhood Systems Team (ECST) review at the kindergarten bills and bring information back to the ECICC.

*Motion*, Heather Gill; seconded, Jane Happe: That the ECST review current bills related to kindergarten, identify issues, suggest possible solutions and bring them back to the ECICC to discuss in a future meeting. There was no discussion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no abstentions.

## 3. Family Story

During the working lunch, Laura Good Buffalo, ECICC member representing families of children with disabilities, presented her family story. She introduced her two children—first-grader, Chance and 10-year old Paulina. She explained the children’s developmental issues that were identified through an Early Head Start referral and the services that were provided through Early Intervention. Now that the children are school aged, the family has learned to be proactive in finding learning supports

through the public school to address some of the learning and physical issues that still remain for the children.

**4. Public Comment**

Heather Fox, Infant-Toddler Specialist, of Head Start State-based Training and Technical Assistance, explained how the stimulus funding (ARRA) would help expand Early Head Start numbers and programs. She expects about a 1.5% increase for Region VII.

**5. Update on Early Childhood Advisory Council Grant**

Amy Pair, ECICC representative on the Early Childhood Systems Team (ECST), directed members to the Status Report notes in their meeting packets. She reviewed the priorities identified at the November 13, 2009 meeting: unified data systems, programs and services, and school readiness. From these, the ECST developed key objectives. ECICC member, Eleanor Kirkland, who is spearheading the writing of the grant proposal, recognized other ECICC members who have been working on it and noted that the status report summarizes what will be in the grant proposal. The writing team will next address these issues in the proposal. Eleanor also explained that the grant proposal includes identification of a state \$1.6 million in-kind match. Melody Hobson is working with the NDE fiscal office to define how this can be done using both public and private funds. The match can be spread across the 3-year project timeline, but also must be sustainable across the three years. The ECST hopes to have a draft submitted to the Governor's Office by April 1 and to report back on the results by the May 14 Council meeting. Eleanor asked members to e-mail her or Amy Pair by March 1 with comments and suggestions. August 1 is the deadline for the grant proposal.

**6. Kindergarten Position Statement**

Jen Benson, NDE Office of Early Childhood, provided meeting participants with a draft of the Executive Summary of the Kindergarten Position Statement. This new document will replace a position statement written 25 years ago. The new position statement describes the kindergarten-aged child, provides research-based supports for teachers and classrooms, and issues a call to action for parents, educators, administrators and policy makers. Currently the writing team is seeking outside input on the draft, which will be followed by more edits from the group and additional posting for public comment. Finally the document will be taken to the State Board of Education for approval. Jen reported that input sessions have been well attended. Frequent topics discussed include the importance of play, a balanced approach to curriculum/instruction, and issues such as entry age and red-shirting. Jen responded to questions and suggestions from the audience and invited them to continue sending comments and suggestions to her about the document and about dissemination of the material when it is finished.

**7. Child Care Licensing Regulations**

Terry Rohren, reporting for Pat Urzedowski, said that the Governor's Policy Research Office was still looking at the proposed revisions to the Child Care Licensing Regulations. It appears that there substantial changes will not be required, but there are alignment issues that may need adjustments. When these issues have been addressed, the regulations will go out for public hearing before the final approval is reached.

**8. Update on Rule 11 Revisions**

Eleanor Kirkland reported that Diane Kvasnicka is shepherding the revision process of NDE Rule 11, which outlines regulations for early childhood programs. The revision of Rule 11 is an internal process by the Office of Early Childhood with input from stakeholders. One of points of revision pertains to guidance for home visitors of infant-toddler programs because of increases in the number of these programs. She encouraged members to look at Rule 11 online and offer suggestions for updates and/or revisions. A draft summary, when it is completed, will be presented to ECICC for review. Rule 11 is posted at: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/LEGAL/Webrulecoverrule11.htm>

**9. Changes in Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection System (CPS)–CAPTA Training and Referrals.**

Chris Hanus, DHHS, provided an update on reforms in child welfare and juvenile services supports to families. She distributed a handout outlining the changes and briefly explained them. She noted that these are the most significant reforms in many years. The changes include reducing the number of contractors for child safety and changing the role to coordinators of delivery services. DHHS is trying to better pinpoint threats to safety and develop strategies to remove the threats. Changes also include a 12-month aftercare system, increasing adoption, and providing federal incentives that are passed on to contractors based on contributions. She noted that privatization is an ambiguous term on how states interpret and implement it. In Nebraska the state retains the safety determination role with follow up and on-going assessment. Referrals to EDN for children under age 3 for substantiated abuse and neglect remains the same. Chris answered questions, discussed strengths and challenges, and described training. DHHS is seeking feedback—both negative and positive—regarding services, processes, and individual complaints.

**10. Agenda items for next meeting**

Council members proposed the following items for the May 14, 2010 scheduled meeting:

- Listening session from local providers (Chadron area)
- Rule 11 draft
- Charter for ECST
- Draft of State Advisory Council grant proposal
- Update on Kindergarten Position Statement and timeline.
- Update on Child Care Licensing until it gets out to public hearings.

Terry Rohren noted that times for the work groups for the video-conference meeting will be staggered and the two time zones will complicate the schedule. The Family Leadership Team will most likely meet at noon.

**11. Adjournment**

*Motion:* Eric Dunning; seconded, Deb Ross: To adjourn the meeting. With no other items to be discussed, the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The Council adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

**Next meeting—May 14, 2010, by video conference:**

- Chadron at Chadron State College—Council meeting begins 11:00 (Mountain Time-MDT)
- Lincoln at Nebraska Education Television—Council meeting begins Noon (Central Time-CDT)
- Working groups will be by video conference with staggered times between 9:00 MDT/10:00 CDT and 2:30 MDT/3:30 CDT.

**MEETING HANDOUTS:**

- ✓ ECICC Updates, February 12, 2010
- ✓ Proposed dates for ECICC meetings in 2011
- ✓ Minutes: ECICC Steering Committee, January 7, 2010
- ✓ Status Report: State Advisory Council Proposal
- ✓ Summary: IDEA-Part C Nebraska Annual Performance Report for FFY 2008 (2008-2009)
- ✓ Status Report: Nebraska Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO), January-February 2010
- ✓ Update on Child Welfare and Juvenile Services Supports to Families, February 12, 2010
- ✓ Draft: Executive Summary—Kindergarten Position Statement, January 2010
- ✓ Legislative packet: Law-making Process, 2010 Committees and Senator Contact Information, 2010 Legislation to Address Issues of Early Childhood, Legislative Bill 1006, *Capitol Connection*, February 1, 2010.